

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 6 January 2015.

- PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.
- Councillors I J Curtis, M Francis,
Mrs P A Jordan, P Kadewere,
S M Van De Kerkhove, Mrs R E Mathews and
Mrs D C Reynolds.
- APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K M Baker, R C Carter and R Fuller.
- IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J D Ablewhite, J A Gray and T D Sanderson.

70. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 6th January 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

71. PROJECT MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

The Chairman announced that in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 he proposed to admit this matter as an urgent item to enable the Panel to appoint replacement representatives to attend a meeting scheduled for 17th February 2015.

Further to Minute No. 2014/ 66, owing to the unavailability of the previously appointed Members on the date of the Select Committee, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillors R C Carter and P Kadaware be appointed to the Project Management Select Committee.

72. MEMBERS INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

73. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st January to 30th June 2015. Members noted that the item on the Review of Safer Homes Scheme Funding would be submitted to their next meeting.

74. THE OCTAGON, STATION ROAD, ST IVES

(Executive Councillors J D Ablewhite and J A Gray were in attendance for the discussion on this item).

Pursuant to Minute No. 2014/63, consideration was given to a report by the Estates Management Surveyor (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the options for the future use of the Octagon, Station Road, St Ives and on the issues raised by the petition relating to the building. The Panel also had the benefit of additional information submitted by Mrs L Wright.

It was reported that the Council was in the process of reviewing its estate and that three proposals had been received relating to the Octagon but no decision had yet been made. The decision would be based on the business cases submitted. The Council would have to be satisfied that the successful bidder's proposal was financially viable.

A Member commented that the building should be brought back into use but the Council should decide what is in the interests of the whole District. St Ives already had a number of community facilities. In response to a question by a Member, it was confirmed that the Council was not seeking to dispose of the freehold of the building. The potential areas for negotiation and terms for an agreement were noted.

Following consideration of the report, the Panel concluded that it was satisfied with the process that the Council had established to determine the use to which the Octagon would be put in the future. Members stressed that they supported bringing the building into public use and the principle that it should provide good value for the tax-payer. In the circumstances, it was

RESOLVED

that no further action be taken in respect of the petition relating to the Octagon, Station Road, St Ives, which was submitted to the last meeting.

75. THE HEALTH ECONOMY

(Executive Councillor T D Sanderson was in attendance for the discussion on this item).

Consideration was given to a report by the Managing Director (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the potential priorities and scope of the Panel's work on the local health economy. It was intended that the deliberations would inform the forthcoming Away Day.

Members were informed that the aim was to make Overview and Scrutiny more effective by broadening the debate on health matters. A primary concern was the way health related services responded to the growth in the population. Various themes were put forward for investigation. The Panel discussed extensively community

engagement and the role of Members. Financial austerity was expected to continue with local government having to accept a significant proportion of the cuts. The District Council would have to cease some of its activities and it was hoped to establish a new relationship with residents to enable them to identify what was important for them and how they would respond. Councillors would be integral to this process, which would promote community resilience. In order to encourage public participation, it would be necessary to make the process relevant to residents. The Communications section was in the process of carrying out research on the best ways of engaging communities. Comment was made that the District Council's activities should form part of a single conversation involving all levels of local government.

Having considered other suggestions for inclusion in the Panel's work programme, it was agreed to receive reports:

- on the current state of Neighbourhood Planning within the Council and how it was likely to develop and how it might promote community resilience;
- on community engagement, including examples of good practice;
- on the impact of Welfare Reforms, including fuel poverty and how it was defined;
- reviewing the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment arrangements, and
- on the impact of growth on GP surgeries, school places and hospital capacity.

In response to a question by a Member, the Panel was informed that work on the diverse range of service areas was co-ordinated through the Corporate Plan. Having agreed to continue the discussion on the future work programme at the Away Day, it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

76. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH COMMITTEE

The Panel received and noted the Cambridgeshire Health Committee Decision Statement for the meeting held on 11th December 2015 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

77. WORKPLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Economic Well-Being and Environmental Well-Being.

78. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL SOCIAL WELL BEING PANEL) - PROGRESS

With the aid of a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel reviewed the progress of its activities since the last meeting. Having decided to defer the update on Redesign of Mental

Health services to a later meeting, it was agreed to undertake some preparatory work in advance of the visit by representatives of Hinchingbrooke Hospital in April. With this in mind, Members requested copies of the Care Quality Commission report following its recent inspection of the Hospital.

79. SCRUTINY

The 151st edition of the Decision Digest was received and noted.

Chairman